

Claims 27 and 73-90 were rejected. Claim 27 is dependent upon a cancelled claim 19. By this amendment, claim 27 has also been cancelled.

Claim 73 is said to improperly recite the correct order of the "first" and "second" identifiers. However, in the amendment of March 6, 2000, responding to the office action of October 6, 1999, such amendments were requested. Similarly, the same defect in claim 82 was addressed then.

2. Prior Art Rejections

The pending claims were variously rejected under Sections 102 and 103 based upon newly cited prior art, namely Takeuchi (U.S. Pat. No. 5,549,717); Goebel (U.S. Pat. No. 4,565,752); and Kelm (U.S. Pat. No. 5,486,215). The pending claims have been amended to recite that a first separator layer is interposed between the anode and cathode assemblies and that the separator layer forms a pocket around the anode assembly with the connector tab being exposed through a slit in the pocket, the pocket being formed by folding the separator over a top edge of the anode assembly, conforming the separator layer to the anode assembly, and joining the separator layer to itself with a seal at a bottom edge of the anode assembly; and that a second separator layer is interposed between the anode and cathode assemblies, the second separator layer forming a pocket around the cathode assembly with the connector tab being exposed through a slit in the pocket, the pocket being formed by folding the separator over a top edge of the cathode assembly, conforming the separator layer to the cathode assembly, and joining the separator layer to itself with a seal at a bottom edge of the cathode assembly.

The examiner noted in paragraph 4 of the office action that Takeuchi discloses a folded separator for placement around anode and cathode assemblies. However, unlike

the amended claims and new claim 91, Takeuchi does not teach or suggest to provide a pocket around both the anode assembly and the cathode assembly. Accordingly, the pending claims distinguish over the prior art cited by the examiner.

Based upon the amendments being made herein, Applicant submits that the claims now pending are in condition for allowance and requests that a notice of allowance be issued in due course.

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Respectfully submitted,

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